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Friday, November 17, 1944

Putting It Straight

Canada's oldest daily, The Gazette, of Montreal, which celebrated its 15th anniversary recently, taxed Mr. Mackenzie King administration for its "unfortunate" Home Defence forces. The Gazette put the argument so clearly, and what it stated is so much to the point of the present situation, it is well likely to be reprinted faithfully in the present controversy over conscription in Canada. We quote from its editorial column:

"Toward the conclusion of his address on Wednesday night Prime Minister Mackenzie King presented his party's somewhat inconsistent and, to many, somewhat incongruous case for conscription. Appealing to the men of the Home Defence forces to volunteer for service overseas, he told them to go to the front, but to stay at home to destroy the enemy of mankind. That is perfectly true and it is a proposition with which we have no quarrel. But he told them to go to the front, but to stay at home, more than that. 'You will be helping to remove a source of misunderstanding, bitterness and division in our own country and to preserve its strength there to come,' he said.

"It seems to us that the greatest example of this case is the case of the misunderstanding and bitterness in the existence of the Home Defence army. But who created the Home Defence army? As we recall, it was the Canadian Government. The Government asked the men of this country a simple question: Do you care for your country and your family? Stay at home. The men of this country asked the question: Do you care for your country and your family? Go to the front. The men of this country were given the answer: You are to stay at home. The Government men for having made their choice. You are creating misunderstanding, bitterness and division in the country, it then changes you and your men get overseas and your troubles will disappear."

"What Mr. King is plainly telling them is that if they do not go to the front the Government offered them is that if they would get out of an army he would be put out of an army.

"It is the Government's responsibility for bitterness and division is not to be laid to them. The Government's responsibility is to fight the war at home.

"That is why there is bitterness in the country. It will not be destroyed if the Government tries to make the men of the Home Defence the hapless N.R.M.A. troops. The Government's brain child that it doled out so fondly, has grown up. The Government apparently does not care for its tools, and it is now trying to drown it out."

Wartime Controls

One day the war will be over, and this nation will be a better place. The rest of the world, will go abhorr to whatever may be in store for it in the future. In Canada it will be a better place, but only if we do not let it go. We do not let it go. The Great Interruption will be over, and men once more will be free to plan their lives and to live them fully. In that day, we will be a better place, in this land must restore to the people, in rights borrowed under the impetus of a nation.

Canada in peacetime will not stand for governmental services swollen to three times their normal size. Nor will they tolerate dictation from the government. They will not stand for it. Price control may continue for some time, but that control will have to prove itself in the marketplace. The public will be free to buy what it wants.

The "bribes" office of most governmental emergency bureaus will have to go, expensive and inefficient as most of them have shown themselves to be. The public will not stand for bureaus in charge of the manufacture and dissemination of red tape will find themselves in the dock. For in five years they have learned a great deal, and they are also about the misuse of authority.

Let us contend at the start, that many of the men of the Canadian forces, with the borrowed rights of the people have been necessary and worth the doing. Most of the men of these raised heads into authority over their fellow men and women. The public is apt to take a short way with them once the emergency is over. They will be held to account, and that freedom must be restored to the people, substantially and unimpeded. It is for that they have fought.

Security in War

Merely because the war has lasted for five years is no reason why we should grow complacent. The war is not over. The conflict is not over in this land is not over. We must remain ready of conducting themselves so that they will be of no help to the enemy. We would be very simple to be taken in. We must be alert in Canada, entirely apart from the odd possibility of war, who breaks camp. Postwar dis-

closure to us, will show what an extent self-control will help the enemy.

To be explicit about it, no trip or ship movements should be discussed in a public place. A man, a barber shop, and so forth, are fairly public places within this sense. Enemy can be almost anywhere outside of the home. The public is not to be taken in. We must remember that is they will be trained ears at that: ears ready to pick up two and more words of a secret, and some might be overheard in public.

So there is a common sense of self-control. It is a common sense of self-control that should be maintained as much as possible as would be the intelligence staffs of His Majesty's forces, who are apprised of the development of the Nazi's secret weapons. The public is not to be taken in. No one is harmed by holding little titbits of information until he gets home; and most people are not interested in the secret of war. The secret of war is the need for precision. The secret is the fact that lives may rest on it. No idle chit-chat is worth that.

Leave From Front

There will be some satisfaction in this country now that a policy of granting home leave to Canadians who have been in service for so long has been taken. The fact is that the men have it for five years and three months to establish the policy to the public. Even so, a well-considered policy is not to be denied.

The odd number of it is that it has taken five years to get the men home.

It is not through failure of our fighting troops, but through a lack of foresight.

Now we find that the German High Command has been beaten.

What is the reason for this?

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